

# THE SUN

*San Bernardino County's Newspaper*

Wednesday, November 1, 2006

## Local leaders of nonprofits receive grants

By Matt Wrye  
Staff Writer

It's not every day you meet a hero. But the other night, at the Victoria Gardens Cultural Center in Rancho Cucamonga, there were five — all dubbed so by Bank of America as part of its second annual Neighborhood Excellence Initiative awards program.

For their outstanding leadership, the "local heroes" each received \$5,000 for the nonprofit organizations they help lead.

Kim Carter, a member of Mynisha's Circle, a coalition dedicated to eradicating violence in San Bernardino, is founder and executive director of the Time for Change Foundation, which helps rebuild the lives of

See AWARDS | Page A4

## AWARDS

Continued from Page A1

women who have survived drug and alcohol addiction, abusive relationships and prison time.

"It's more than just a drop in the bucket," Carter said about the grant. "We don't even have a bucket. It's something that's going to sustain life for three or four months. It'll provide them an opportunity to re-establish themselves."

There's a constant need to re-supply her organization's resources, Carter said, and that's what the grant money will be used for.

Michael Chee, Bank of America spokesman, said Carter and the others who were recognized Monday night often do not receive large grants for their community work because they don't have the opportunity to apply for such funds.

"It's the foundation's clear intent to provide financial backing to these individuals so they could leverage their work more effectively," Chee said.

"These are exactly the kind of people that may go unknown to the community at large, but are working quietly and influentially to bring change and improvements to a community," he added.

Ira Maser, an award winner and a member of the Rebuilding Mountain Hearts and Lives board, said it's difficult for small organizations to get grants.

"They're just not out there," he said.

His nonprofit helps mountain communities from Crestline to Cedar Glen rebuild after natural disasters.

After the 2003 Old Fire hit communities in the San Bernardino Mountains, some people organized donation drives while Maser was busy recruiting volunteers. But despite all the help he's found since then, Maser says the organization still lacks the man hours needed to adequately support displaced residents' recovery.

"We need full-time people," Maser said, alluding to paid workers in addition to using volunteers. "That's the problem with long-term recovery."

Maser said he will use his grant money to cover overhead costs and help pay for the full-time workers he needs.

Another award winner, Dorothy Grant, said that while the grant may be less than other donations, "it's still a lot."

Grant is a 28-year member of the Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County, which offers assistance to low-income families to help them become self-reliant.

"With Thanksgiving at hand, we can give a lot," Grant said. "We feed people. We clothe people. We focus on helping everybody that needs help."

Victoria Jackson of the Coalition for Common Ground and Valerie Smith of the Yucca Loma Family Center in Apple Valley were also awarded grants for their work in discouraging violence and intolerance and providing services to unemployed or unskilled parents.

Besides the awards to individuals, the bank gave \$200,000 directly to two local nonprofits — Michelle's Place, a breast cancer resource center serving Riverside County; and Vista Guidance Center, a mental health and substance-abuse treatment center.

Also, five local high school students were honored for improving their communities and received paid, eight-week summer internships at local organizations and an opportunity for leadership training and community service activities with Bank of America executives.



Committed to finding solutions to crime in our community. Learn more at [www.sbsun.com](http://www.sbsun.com).

## MYNISHA'S CIRCLE

### EVENTS

■ **Unforgettables Foundation**, which has helped 400 families shoulder burial costs for children, will celebrate a successful year with a Nov. 11 gala, sponsored by Inland Empire Magazine. More information: [www.unforgettables.com](http://www.unforgettables.com) or Theresa Larsen at (909) 831-3220.

## PROGRAMS/MEETINGS/SERVICES

■ **Operation Phoenix Foundation**, a nonprofit organization aimed at fighting crime in San Bernardino, has been launched by city officials to sustain prevention and intervention programs long after government support is discontinued. Operation Phoenix Director Glenn Baude said the foundation will fund grass-roots efforts to provide youth-oriented programs in low-income neighborhoods. Donations may be made by check or money order to: Operation Phoenix Foundation, 1450 N. Waterman Ave., San Bernardino, CA 92404.

■ **Young Visionaries Youth Leadership Academy** invites young people ages 16-18 to participate in weekly work-training programs aimed at motivating youths to choose jobs over street life over street life. Classes are from 3 to 5 p.m. each Friday. More information: (909) 881-3382 or [www.yvyla.org/programs.html](http://www.yvyla.org/programs.html).

■ **San Bernardino Career Resource Center**, 8120 Palm Lane, offers free services for job-seekers and employers. Career counseling, workshops and mock interviews are available, as are employer services and benefits. More information: (909) 386-6219. Interested businesses can call (909) 386-6208.

■ **Inland Empire United Way's** Web site connects volunteers with local agencies. More information: [www.handsinlandempire.org](http://www.handsinlandempire.org) or (909) 980-2857, ext. 227 or 228.

## CLASSES

■ **Boys & Girls Club of San Bernardino**, 1180 W. Ninth St., offers kids a variety of daily classes that include swimming, reading, tae kwon do, basketball, and arts and crafts. There is a \$7 annual membership, but scholarships and other opportunities are offered those in need of financial assistance. More information: (909) 888-6751.

■ **Delmann Heights Community Center**, 2969 N. Flores St., San Bernardino, offers a variety of classes daily, weekly and monthly, including cooking, music and open-mic sessions. More information: (909) 384-5417.

■ **Rudy C. Hernandez Community Center**, 222 N. Lugo Ave., San Bernardino, offers a variety of activities throughout the week, including cooking classes and youth-club gatherings. More information: (909) 384-5420.

■ **Nicholson Park Community Center**, 2750 W. Second St., San Bernardino, offers a variety of games and classes weekdays. More information: (909) 874-3423.

■ **People's Choice Inc.**, 1505 W. Highland Ave., San Bernardino, offers anger-management courses, community-service resources and makes available basketball courts during business hours. More information: (909) 887-3524.

If you know of any other community events, centers or organizations, send submissions to **The Sun**, 2239 Gannett Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407 or [community.news@sbsun.com](mailto:community.news@sbsun.com).